

Victim Compensation Connection



Crime Victims' Rights Week
Events Across California

Board Increases Mental
Health Counseling Rates for
Victims

Santa Clara County
Launches A New Restitution
Court

Rosario Marin
Board Chair
Secretary, State and
Consumer Services
Agency

Steve Westly
Board Member
State Controller

Michael Ramos
Board Member
District Attorney
San Bernardino County

The Victim Compensation
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Helping California
crime victims since
1965

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From the Desk of Karen McGagin, Executive Officer



Karen McGagin

Early this year, the three-member Victim Compensation and Government Claims Board took actions intended to increase the availability of mental health services to victims. These actions include increased session limits, reduced paperwork, and increased payment rates for the various licensed mental health professionals who provide services to victims. Over the last two months we have spread the word about the changes through notification to mental health providers, educational outreach efforts at professional conferences and publishing informational articles in periodicals for the various mental health licensing boards and professional associations.

The Victim Compensation Program also recently implemented a new program to pre-authorize payment for dental treatment needed as a result of a crime. Pre-authorization will make dental services more accessible to those victims who are so very much in need of such services. All of these service enhancements are discussed in more detail on page 6 of this newsletter.

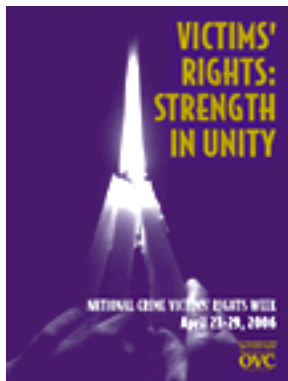
As Crime Victims' Rights Week approaches, this year's theme of "Strength in Unity," strikes me as a

particularly powerful statement for the rights of victims of crime. Once again this year, victim compensation programs and victim assistance programs across the nation face the possibility of the rescission of the federal VOCA (Victims of Crime Act) fund reserves. Current projections predict that if the rescission occurs, the fund will be empty at the beginning of Federal Fiscal Year 2008. Over the last two months an unprecedented coalition of crime victims and survivors, victim service providers, victim advocacy organizations, criminal and juvenile justice professionals, and public officials at all levels have come together to save the VOCA fund.

State victim compensation agencies nationwide pay almost \$500 million per year to help victims. Compensation programs have doubled in size over the last decade, and depend on VOCA for a full third of their funding. Last year California received \$25 million dollars in VOCA funds to support compensation payments. VOCA is equally important in funding victim assistance programs.

I am delighted to join Californians and pay tribute to crime victims and survivors during Crime Victims' Rights Week. Also, the theme, "Victims' Rights: Strength in Unity," recognizes the ongoing efforts of victim service providers, criminal and juvenile justice professionals, and their allies who dedicate their lives to helping victims of crime. Thank you for all that you do.

Crime Victims' Rights Week Events Across California



During the week of April 23-29, 2006, crime victims and victim advocates will join together across the state to promote victims' rights and services, and to educate our communities about the devastating impact of crime on victims and their families, neighborhoods, and cities.

The theme of the 2006 National Crime Victims' Rights Week, "Victims' Rights: Strength in Unity," is being highlighted in many of the events. The VCGCB provided media kits to victim witness assistance centers throughout California to help them publicize their events.

Below are a few examples of local efforts to pay tribute to victims and survivors:

Los Angeles Honors Victims' Rights Week With Three Events

On Tuesday, April 18, the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office sponsored a Victims' Rights Recognition Ceremony at the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors Hearing Room. The ceremony took place at 9:30 a.m. with a brunch following at 10:30 a.m. The Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors recognized the work of the Los Angeles County Victim Witness Assistance program advocates and claims specialists. The Board of Supervisors also honored the Deputy District Attorneys, advocates, and victims for their courage, compassion, and commitment.

On Sunday, April 23, the Los Angeles City Attorney's Office and the Los Angeles Mayor's Office are co-sponsoring the 2nd Annual "5K Run/Walk for Victims' Rights 2006." The 1st Annual event in 2005 raised more than \$40,000, all of which went to 21 community-based victim service agencies in Los Angeles. Each runner/walker will receive a t-shirt, goodie bag, finisher's medal, and raffle ticket. This year's course will be held at Exposition Park and the surrounding area. The awards ceremony and the raffle are scheduled to take place at the finish line. Live entertainment, food, and a resource fair will also be available.



Crime Victims' Rights Week – 2005
City of Los Angeles 1st Annual 5K Run/Walk

On Friday, April 28, the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office has scheduled a Victim Summit at the Department of Public Social Services in El Monte. Leaders of local grassroots organizations and community-based victims' rights groups are invited to attend. The Summit provides attendees with the opportunity to network, share resources, and strategize about maximizing limited resources.

Alameda County will hold its annual "A Tribute to Victims and Survivors" on Monday, April 24.



Crime Victims' Rights Week Events Across California (cont'd)

Nevada County Honors Victims' Rights Week

Nevada County co-sponsors their "Ribbons of Hope" crime victims' awareness luncheon with the Welz Family Children's Foundation, and the Child Abuse Prevention Council of Western Nevada County on Monday, April 24. The luncheon will feature the Honorable Lois Haight as guest speaker. Nevada County is hosting their 8th Annual "Candlelight Vigil" on Thursday, April 27. On Friday, April 28, Nevada County will honor those who have died as a result of crime at their "Victims' Photographic Memorial Wall Unveiling."

Madera County Celebrates Victims' Rights Week With Two Events

Students from the criminology department at Pioneer School, a local continuation high school, and Madera County victim witness staff unveiled a display case at the Madera County Courthouse on Saturday, April 1. The display case was created in honor of the Victims' Rights Week theme, "Strength in Unity." On Thursday, April 27, Madera County will host a "Sack Lunch in the Courthouse." Selected officials who have supported victim services and victims in an outstanding manner will be presented with an award, a quilt honoring victims will be displayed, and over 100 white balloons will be released during the closing ceremony in remembrance of those who lost their lives in violent crimes.

Monterey County and the Community Restorative Justice Commission will co-sponsor their 7th Annual Victim's Dedication Ceremony on Tuesday, April 25.

Sonoma County will honor the courage of survivors of crime and those who make a difference in their lives at their 3rd Annual "Victims' Rights Week Luncheon." The luncheon will be held on Tuesday, April 25.

Del Norte County will host their annual awards event to honor police and victims. The awards will be given at the "Victim Witness Luncheon" on Wednesday, April 26 at Pelican State Prison.

San Francisco County celebrates their "District Attorney's Justice Awards Ceremony" on Wednesday, April 26.

San Diego County will celebrate "Citizens of Courage" at its annual awards luncheon on Thursday, April 27.

Santa Clara County will honor "Unsung Heroes" at its annual awards luncheon on Thursday, April 27 to aid victims and advance victims' rights. The Unsung Heroes, nominated by several agencies, will receive an award at the luncheon.

Shasta County and the Shasta County Women's Refuge are co-sponsoring their 11th Annual "Take Back the Night" on Thursday, April 27. This year's event includes a resource fair with over 40 information booths, drinks, and food. The victim's garden, a community collaboration, will be dedicated at the commencement ceremony.

April is Child Abuse Prevention Month



Every 10 seconds a child is abused or neglected. Prevention efforts are alerting people to the problem of child abuse and neglect. Only through our commitment to change and our willingness to research what will create a better future for our children will we combat the growing problem of child abuse and neglect.

If you would like more information about Child Abuse Prevention Month, you can visit the California Department of Social Services, Office of Child Abuse Prevention, web site at www.dss.cahwnet.gov.cdssweb/ChildAbuse_188.htm.

Crime Victims' Rights Week Calendar of Events Across The State

SATURDAY, APRIL 1, 2006

Display Case Unveiling

Sponsor: Madera County Victim
Witness Assistance
Center
Location: Madera County
Courthouse

FRIDAY, APRIL 7, 2006

Victims' Rights Conference and Luncheon

Sponsor: CSP, Victim Assistance
Programs
Time: 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.
Location: The Phoenix Club
1340 S. Anderson,
Anaheim

TUESDAY, APRIL 18, 2006

Victims' Rights Recognition Ceremony

Sponsor: Los Angeles County
D.A.'s Office
Time: 9:30 a.m., Brunch
following at 10:30 a.m.
Location: L.A. County Board of
Supervisors Hearing
Room, 500 West
Temple St., L.A.

THURSDAY, APRIL 20, 2006

Candlelight Vigil

Sponsor: Mothers Against
Murder, Troy and Alana
Pack Foundation,
Survivors of Murder
Victims
Time: 7:00 p.m.
Location: Christ the King Parish
Hall, Pleasant Hill

SUNDAY, APRIL 23, 2006

Run for Victims' Rights

Sponsor: City of Los Angeles
Time: 8:00 a.m. (runners)
and 8:15 a.m. (walkers)
Location: Exposition Park

MONDAY, APRIL 24, 2006

17th Annual Victims' March on the Capitol

Sponsor: CCPOA
Time: 11:45 a.m.
Location: California State Capitol
Sacramento

A Tribute to Victims & Survivors

Sponsor: Alameda County D.A.'s
Office
Time: 12:00 p.m. to 1:30 p.m.
Location: 470 27th Street
Oakland

Ribbons of Hope 2006 Crime Victims' Awareness Luncheon

Sponsor: Nevada County Victim/
Witness Assistance
Center, The Welz
Family Children's
Foundation, Child
Abuse Prevention
Council of Western
Nevada County
Time: 12:00 to 1:30 p.m.
Location: Miner's Foundry
Nevada City

11th Annual Victim's Dinner

Sponsor: Crime Victims United of
California
Time: 6:00 p.m. (cocktails)
and 7:00 p.m. (dinner)
Location: Sheraton Grand Hotel
1230 J Street
Sacramento

TUESDAY, APRIL 25, 2006

Victims' Rights Week Memorial Quilt Celebration

Sponsor: Kings County Probation
Department
Time: 10:00 a.m.
Location: Government Center
Complex Courtyard
Hanford

TUESDAY, APRIL 25, 2006

Victims' Rights Recognition Ceremony

Sponsor: Tuolumne County
Victim Witness
Assistance Center

National Crime Victims' Rights Week Education Faire

Sponsor: CSP, Victim Assistance
Programs
Time: 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.
Location: Central Justice Center,
Plaza of Flags
Santa Ana

Victims' Rights Week Luncheon

Sponsor: Sonoma County Victim
Witness Assistance
Center
Time: 11:30 a.m.
Location: Hyatt Vineyard Creek
Santa Rosa

7th Annual Victim's Dedication Ceremony

Sponsor: Monterey County
District Attorney's
Office Victims of Crime
Unit, Community
Restorative Justice
Commission
Time: 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.
Location: Salinas Courthouse
Courtyard

Victims' Rights Awards Luncheon

Sponsor: Riverside County D.A.'s
Office
Time: 12:00 to 1:00 p.m.
Location: Old Spaghetti
Factory

Crime Victims' Rights Week Calendar of Events Across The State (cont'd)

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 26, 2006

Victim Witness Luncheon

Sponsor: Del Norte County D.A.'s Office
Location: Pelican State Prison

District Attorney's Justice Awards Ceremony

Sponsor: San Francisco County D.A.'s Victim Services Division
Location: Hall of Justice, Jury Assembly Room
San Francisco

Victims' Rights Week Recognition Ceremony

Sponsor: Tuolumne County Victim Witness Assistance Center
Time: 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.
Location: Wal-Mart

THURSDAY, APRIL 27, 2006

Victims' Rights Luncheon

Sponsor: San Joaquin County D.A.'s Office
Time: 11:30 a.m.
Location: Hunter Square
Stockton

Unsung Hero's Luncheon

Sponsor: Victim Support Network for Santa Clara County
Time: 12:00 p.m.
Location: Presbyterian Church of Los Gatos

Citizen's of Courage Luncheon

Sponsor: San Diego County D.A.'s Office
Time: 12:00 p.m. to 1:30 p.m.
Location: Omni Hotel, Petco Park

THURSDAY, APRIL 27, 2006

Victims' Rights Awards Ceremony

Sponsor: Stanislaus County D.A.'s Office, Modesto Police Department/Sun-Carrington Foundation
Time: 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Location: Salida Library, Salida

8th Annual Candlelight Vigil

Sponsor: Nevada County D.A.'s Office
Time: 5:30 p.m.
Location: Nevada County Courthouse, Nevada City

11th Annual Take Back the Night

Sponsor: Shasta County Victim Witness Assistance Center
Time: 5:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.
Victims' Rights Week

Candlelight Vigil

Sponsor: Sonoma County Victim Witness Assistance Center
Time: 6:00 p.m.
Location: Sonoma County Hall of Justice, Santa Rosa

"As He Lay" Play

Sponsor: Valley Trauma Center
Time: 8:00 p.m.
Location: Cal State University, Northridge Little Theater

Sack Lunch in the Courthouse

Sponsor: Madera County Victim Witness Assistance Center
Location: Madera County Courthouse

FRIDAY, APRIL 28, 2006

Victim Summit

Sponsor: Los Angeles County D.A.'s Office
Time: 8:30 a.m.
Location: Department of Public Social Services

Attorney General's Office of Victims' Services Annual Crime Victims' Conference

Sponsor: State of California Office of the Attorney General
Time: 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Location: Secretary of State Office, First Floor Auditorium, Sacramento

Recognition Ceremony

Sponsor: Tuolumne County Victim Witness Assistance Center
Time: 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Location: Wal-Mart

Victims' Photographic Memorial Wall Unveiling

Sponsor: Nevada County D.A.'s Office
Time: 4:30 p.m.

Victims' Memorial Quilt Unveiling

Sponsor: Tulare County D.A.'s Office
Time: 6:00 p.m.
Location: Board of Supervisors Chambers, Visalia

Victims' Rights Week

"As He Lay" Play
Sponsor: Valley Trauma Center
Time: 8:00 p.m.
Location: Cal State University, Northridge, Little Theater

Board Increases Mental Health Counseling Rates For Victims

The Board approved important changes to the reimbursement rates for mental health services at its meeting on February 16, 2006. The VCGCB took this action because mental health services are a critical resource for crime victims as they deal with the aftermath of violent crime.

An informational copy of the new reimbursement rates was filed

“We have held to our commitment to review existing regulations and increase reimbursement that is consistent with current professional mental health rates.”

Karen McGagin

with the Secretary of State pursuant to Government Code section 13957.2(a) and became effective for claims filed on or after March 1, 2006. In one year, the VCGCB will again review the effect of the new rates.

For more information, call 1-800-777-9229 or visit the Victim Compensation Program website at www.victimcompensation.ca.gov.

Overview of the Mental Health Counseling Rate Changes

Reimbursement Rates

Mental health rates may be reimbursed per session:

- Up to \$130 for Psychiatrists
- Up to \$110 for Psychologists
- Up to \$90 for Marriage and Family Therapists (MFT's), Licensed Clinical Social Workers (LCSW's), Psychiatric Mental Health Nurses, and Clinical Nurse Specialists
- Group therapy rates continue to be reimbursed at 40 percent of the individual therapy rates.

Effective Dates

Reimbursement rate changes are effective for bills with dates of service after March 1, 2006.

Pre-Authorized Approval Implemented To Assist Dentists In Treating Victims Of Crime-reword to advocates and public

Dentists throughout California often play a crucial role in helping crime victims recover from injuries. A crime victim may have injuries requiring oral or maxillofacial surgery to reconstruct damage caused by an assault, domestic violence, child abuse, an accident caused by a drunk driver, or another violent crime.

To assist dentists who choose to help crime victims in need of dental treatment, the VCGCB has implemented a new procedure to provide a means for dental providers to obtain preauthorized approval for treatment. Dentists may now submit a pre-treatment estimate on an approved American Dental Association (ADA) Claim Form to the VCGCB for review.

When a dentist submits a pre-treatment estimate, the VCGCB will review the document to make sure the treatment is crime-related. Should the information be

insufficient to make a determination, the VCGCB may ask the treating dentist for additional data. If the treatment is approved, the provider will be notified immediately. Once the preauthorization is given, the dentist may provide the approved services and submit the bill to the VCGCB for payment.

In fiscal year 2004-05, the VCGCB approved 635 claims and paid out \$830,773 to dentists for providing a variety of professional services to meet the needs of victims. The new preauthorization procedure should improve the compensation process for dentists who offer their services to victims of violent crime.

For more information, call 1-800-777-9229 or visit the Victim Compensation Program website at www.victimcompensation.ca.gov.

Calendar of Events

JANUARY 23, 2006

California District Attorneys Association (CDAA) Winter Workshop

This four-day workshop was attended by Karen McGagin, Executive Officer, and Laura Hill, Deputy Executive Officer for Revenue Recovery and Accounting.

JANUARY 30-FEBRUARY 1, 2006

California Police Chiefs Association Conference in Palm Springs

VCGCB staff participated in this conference, attended by hundreds of chiefs and administrators from throughout the state. They staffed an information booth, answered questions about the VCGCB, and distributed various VCGCB publications.

FEBRUARY 17, 2006

Restitution Recovery and Accounting Division staff provided training to the Monterey County Probation Department.

FEBRUARY 23, 2006

Second Annual Identity Theft Summit

VCGCB staff attended the event and staffed an information booth, answered questions about the Board, and distributed the various VCGCB publications.

FEBRUARY 27-MARCH 10, 2006

The Policy and Training Unit presented a two-week training to new claims processors from Joint Powers Verification Units in Sacramento.

MARCH 15, 2006

Victim Compensation Program Advisory Committee

The 12-member advisory committee met regarding crime victims' issues and needs with respect to compensation. Nancy O'Malley, Alameda County Chief Assistant District Attorney, was the featured speaker.

APRIL 9-12, 2006

112th Annual California Sheriff's Association Conference

VCGCB employees staffed an information booth, answered questions about the Board, and distributed the various VCGCB publications.

VCGCB Staff Attend The 60th Annual California Psychological Association Convention



James Kent, Ph.D., Consulting Psychologist, Afzal Rashid, Manager for the QAMH Section, and Janice Patton-Reents, Analyst for the QAMH Section, attended the California Psychological Association's (CPA) 60th Annual Convention in San Francisco on March 23-26.

The conference included master lecturers, workshops, plenary sessions, and keynote presentations.

Some of the workshops were *The Disease of Violence - A New Public Health Model; prevention, Intervention, and Rehabilitation*; and *Practical Methods for Enhancing Positive Outcomes and Reducing Treatment Failure: The Case for Early Identification*.

The VCGCB employees in attendance also staffed a booth providing information about the Victim Compensation Program, as well as the new mental health rate and session increases. There was much interest in learning more about the VCGCB from the hundreds of licensed psychologists in attendance at the conference.

Crime Victims' Rights Week Calendar (cont'd from page 5)

SATURDAY, APRIL 29, 2006

"Wish You Were Here"

Sponsor: Justine Vanderschoot's Fund
Time: 4:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m.
Location: Gold Country Fairgrounds

"As He Lay" Play

Sponsor: Valley Trauma Center
Time: 8:00 p.m.
Location: Cal State University, Northridge Little Theater

Updated Provider Page on VCGCB Internet

In March, the VCGCB posted a new webpage designed to give medical, mental health, dental, and funeral/burial providers accurate, up-to-date information about how to work with the Victim Compensation Program (VCP). This updated page gives providers help with becoming a VCP provider, the types of expenses that can be reimbursed, and reimbursement rates and policies, including frequently asked questions about payments. The page is also a resource for provider specific forms and publications.

To find out more about VCP payment policies, billing procedures, and rate structures, please go to the VCGCB website at <http://www.vcgcb.ca.gov/ProviderInformation.htm>.

Santa Clara County Launches A New Restitution Court

Santa Clara County is finding success in its new restitution court. Judge Edward Frederick Lee of the Santa Clara County Superior Court is holding the restitution sessions two dates per month from 9:00 a.m. to noon. On the first day of restitution court on February 17, seven out of the eight cases on the calendar were settled. During their second session on March 17, ten out of the 12 cases on the calendar were settled. After three sessions, over \$127,000 has been paid and 98% of the cases have been settled.

Santa Clara County's restitution court hasn't changed the amount of work for the Criminal Restitution Compact (CRC) staff. The CRC staff investigate cases and prepare the documents necessary to collect restitution. The CRC staff must also abide by the fifteen day notice requirement and file motions for each case that goes to restitution court. Although the CRC staff still have a heavy workload, the restitution court has made their jobs easier. According to Steve Dippert of the Santa Clara County District Attorney's Office, fixing orders takes less time. "In the past, we had to file with multiple courts, in multiple locations, on multiple dates, and with multiple District Attorneys, so this is restitution heaven," said Mr. Dippert.

"In the past, we had to file with multiple courts, in multiple locations, on multiple dates, and with multiple District Attorneys, so this is restitution heaven."

Steve Dippert

The accomplishments seen by the restitution court in such a short amount of time are a tribute to the hard work of CRC staff and Judge Lee. Crime victims in Santa Clara County will have better access to restitution.

April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month



Abuse can take the form of physical, emotional, or sexual violence. Women, men, children, and the elderly can be victimized. Sexual assault crosses all boundaries of gender, race, nationality and age.

Education about family violence and increased resources for its victims is a national concern. Working together with social services, physicians, victim witness advocates, mental health providers, and prosecutors, we can bring about social change. Strong victims' rights laws make a difference, and we must also be certain that victims' needs are met.

If you would like more information, you can visit the California Coalition Against Sexual Assault web site at www.calcasa.org.